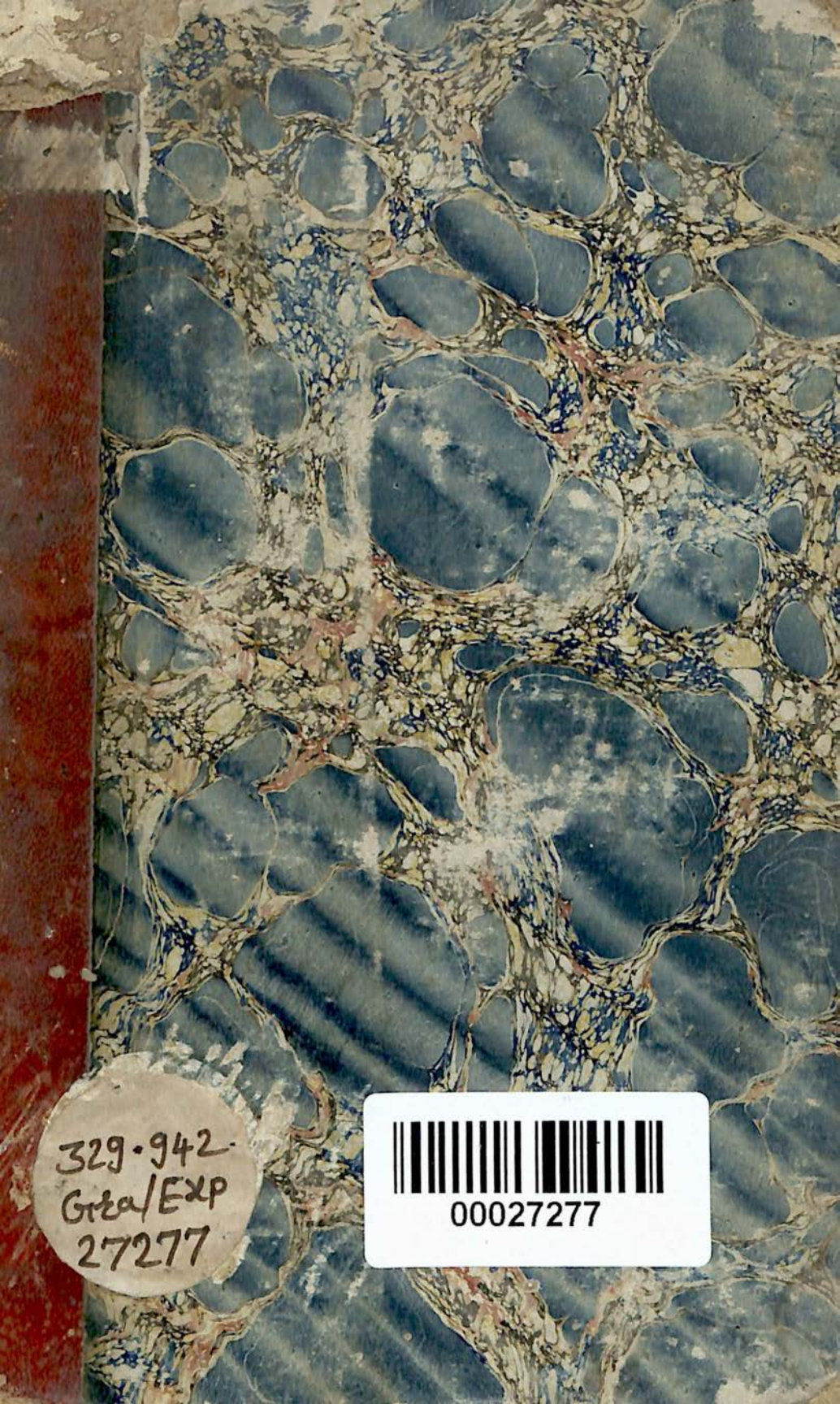
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'EXPEDIT—LABOREMUS'

An Address delivered at Elgin on Tuesday, December 10, 1872,

BY

MOUNTSTUART E. GRANT DUFF, M.P.,

UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA.

27277

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GENTLEMEN,—It is just fifteen years to-morrow since I first sought the suffrages of this constituency, which has been so indulgent and so leal to me. Fifteen years is half a generation of men—a fact of which I am painfully reminded as I look round and see how many old familiar faces are gone from this room. Mr. Isaac Forsyth, Dr. Stephen, Dr. Paul, Mr. George Leslie, Provost Grant, are only a few of those whose names I connect with my first election, but whose place now knows them no more.

Under these circumstances, I do not know that we can spend this evening better, than in tracing together the route we have traversed since we first came into the relation in which we now stand—if, in other words, we try very rapidly to review the progress that has been made by the Liberal cause in the leading countries of the world since the end of the year 1857. I say the Liberal cause in the leading countries of the world, because it is idle and wholly misleading to attempt to trace its progress in one country only. What is done here acts upon what is done in a thousand other places; and what is done in a thousand other places reacts upon what is done here.

1858. The year 1858 was not a very fruitful one in British legislation. In the month of February a violent quarrel, which had nothing to do with politics properly so called, broke out between Lord Palmerston and a large portion of his own party. The result of that quarrel was a brief period of Conservative *administration*, but not of Conservative *power*, for, during its whole continuance, the Liberal party had an overwhelming majority in the House of Commons, and the only measures of any moment that were passed were essentially Liberal measures. One of these, the bill of that long-tried and excellent reformer, Mr. Locke King, abolishing the property qualification, up to that time required for most members of Parliament, had been, strange to say, one of the points of the Charter; but, long ere 1858, people had begun to see that, although that qualification clearly ought to be swept away as being simply invidious, it was nevertheless of no practical importance. The same session saw the close of the long battle which the Liberal party had fought for the admission of Jews into Parliament. Baron Rothschild peaceably took his seat, and has been followed by some seven or eight of his co-religionists, several of whom have added not a little to the business ability of the House of Commons, and none of whom have, as many worthy persons once feared, tried to unchristianize the British nation. The most important Act of the year was, however, that which put an end to the East India Company's political power. Somewhat too high hopes were built upon the direct effects of that measure by those who forgot or did not know

how great the power of the Ministry of the day had long been in all Indian matters. The Act of 1858 did little more than simplify the course of business, make that patent to all the world which was known to those who cared to look into the subject before (that India, to nearly all intents and purposes, was as much under the Government of the Cabinet and of Parliament as other parts of the Queen's Dominions), and, above all, impart to the management of our greatest dependency that sort of energy and freshness that proverbially comes from changes which, even if not very great in themselves, are made in a right direction.

The same year saw the embers of the Indian Mutiny stamped out, as well as the conclusion of the treaty of Tientsin, and the Commercial Treaty with Japan. Both of these treaties gave a very considerable impulse to trade and civilisation in the Eastern Seas, and the second was the most important of that string of causes which have combined to make the recent history of Japan the most extraordinary fairy tale of progress that has ever been told in the world —a fairy tale so extraordinary that a cool-headed spectator can do nothing but fold his hands, wonder what will come next, and trust that all may be well.

Another event of a more private and domestic kind —the marriage of the Princess Royal with the future Crown Prince of Prussia and Imperial Prince of Germany—not only gave much satisfaction to the nation at the time, but is worthy of mention along with the events to which I have just referred, as having brought new hope and encouragement at a critical

time to the Liberal party in the most rising of all European States—hope and encouragement which after years have not disappointed.

1859. The Session of 1859 did nothing for us except to replace the helm of the Commonwealth in the hands of that statesman in whom the country had in those days most confidence, and likewise definitively to attach Mr. Gladstone to the Liberal party. 1859 was a year of many victories to the Liberal cause, but they were victories gained rather on the battle-field than in the Council Chamber. On New Year's day were heard the first mutterings of the storm which soon broke over the Ticino. The brilliant campaign which ended with the strange, though, as it turned out, neither unwise nor unfortunate anti-climax of Villafranca, dissipated the dream that Italy was to be for all time a mere geographical expression. The double eagle ceased to overshadow Lombardy with his wings, and the evil little Governments which had mismanaged Central Italy received their death blow. Appropriately enough Prince Metternich closed his long career just a few days before the war began.

On the other side of the Atlantic the affray at Harper's Ferry, and the trial and execution of Brown, showed that the anti-slavery agitation had passed into a dangerous phase. When asked what he had to say in his defence, he replied :—'Gentlemen, make an end of slavery, or slavery will make an end of you'—ominous words, to be remembered ere many months had gone by on many a bloody field.

1860. The good understanding between the French and English Governments had never been very seriously

disturbed by the Orsini affair in 1858, although it suited the purposes of faction at the time to assert that it had. On the other hand, the good understanding between the public opinion and the press of the two countries had been very seriously disturbed. The mutual irritation might possibly have died away, if the remarkable promptitude of the French War Office in preparing the expedition of 1859 into Italy had not added a feeling of alarm to the resentment which was created on this side by the folly of certain French colonels who were, or professed to be, anxious for the invasion of England. It was that alarm which led to the formation of the first volunteer corps, and its exhibition in that and various other ways naturally added to the irritation in France. It is probable—I think I might use a much stronger adjective—that a desire to counteract a tendency in the public mind, which might well have forced his hand and driven him into hostilities with England, was one of the motives which induced the Emperor Napoleon to throw himself with so much zeal into the negotiations for the Commercial Treaty, which was announced in the beginning of 1860, to the rage and despair of the French Protectionists. I well remember conversing with M. Thiers the first evening on which the Treaty was generally talked about in Paris, and it is strange to recollect how little any one then dreamed that that man, already old and with so agitated a past behind him, would live to be so important a personage as he now is.

This ever memorable compact was not only the occasion for far the most important reforms that have

been introduced into our own financial system during the last fifteen years, but will be the starting-point from which, in after time, most of the Continental nations will date the beginning of wise legislation in their own commercial affairs. Its direct effects have been great, but its indirect effects have been enormous, and enormous is the gratitude we owe to those who brought it about. Well might Mr. Gladstone, after paying a most justly merited tribute to the conduct of the Emperor during the negotiation, remark with regard to the Englishman who had been chiefly concerned in it—'Rare is the privilege of any man, who having fourteen years ago rendered to his country one signal and splendid service, now again, within the same brief span of life, decorated neither by rank nor title, bearing no mark to distinguish him from the people whom he serves, has been permitted again to perform a great and memorable service to his Sovereign and to his country.'

The financial arrangements consequent upon the Treaty were in some instances stoutly resisted, as was natural, by the Conservative party, but repeated divisions showed that the opinion of the House of Commons had been made up from the outset to support the great scheme of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in its entirety. Some of the bitterest opposition to certain parts of his measures came from speakers on the Liberal side, an opposition partly to be explained by the fact that, all through the session of 1860, the conduct of the Emperor in other matters was such as to give most just umbrage to this, and, indeed, to all the

countries of Europe, and partly by the fact that many of the best Frenchmen, who were in close relations with English Society, cared more for Parliamentary Government than for commercial reforms, however beneficent, and kept continually forcing upon the attention of their English friends the undoubted truth that this great Treaty had been made against the public opinion of France, and would not have been made if France had been under Parliamentary Government. Looking back dispassionately on the discussions of those days, one cannot but feel that the whole case, the purely political and the financial combined, might have been better put before the country than they were, if Lord Russell had devoted anything like the same attention during his long career to foreign as to domestic affairs, and if he had been as well served at all other Courts as he was at the Court of Turin.

The next great gain made by the Liberal cause in 1860 was the fall of the detestable tyranny of the Two Sicilies, brought about by Garibaldi's miraculous, and, strange to say, almost accidental expedition to Sicily. The best friends of Italy looked pale when they heard the first tidings of that astounding enterprise, fearing that it would merely commence another era of those hideous oppressions of which the Garden of the Mediterranean has known so many, and fearing, too, that it might compromise advantages already gained. But the impossible occurred. Since the walls of Jericho fell down before the armies of Israel, nothing like it ever happened, and, for the first time in history, a

victorious invader entered the capital of a great kingdom as a peaceful passenger in a railway train. The efforts of Lamoricière and other Crusaders were nearly as futile as those of the unhappy King of Naples, and, by the end of the year, the three-parts-united Italy was left face to face with Austria in Venetia, and with the Pope in the Patrimony of St. Peter.

In a distant portion of the globe another gain to the cause of progress was made by the stern lesson that was read by Lord Elgin to the Chinese Government, which had disgraced itself not only by breaking faith, but by the most horrible atrocities; and if the secession of South Carolina from the American Union seemed at first a heavy blow to that cause, it was eventually, as we all know, productive of a very different result.

1861. The first day of 1861 was the last of the life of the last King of Prussia, but his death was not an event of political importance, the political advantages which had been anticipated from it having been discounted, so to speak, when his brother, the present Emperor of Germany, became regent. Frederick William IV. was a man of many gifts and of many excellent impulses, but it has been most truly said of him that he was the very incarnation of the nineteenth century, in so far as it denies and renounces the eighteenth; that is, in so far as its spirit is not Liberal.

Far the most remarkable event of the year in the way of gain to the Liberal cause was the emancipation of the serfs through the wide domains of Russia.

one of the greatest and most beneficent acts of our time, but which, occurring in a remote and little understood country, has never yet quite taken its proper place in our thoughts and recollections.

The emancipation of the serfs has been only one of many measures which have illustrated the reign of the present Emperor, and put his great empire upon quite a new footing. I want, by the bye, to take this opportunity of calling attention to an excellent first-hand book, called 'Russia in 1870,' by a Mr. Barry, a plain, sensible Englishman, who possesses the great merit of seeing out of his eyes, and of saying what he has seen out of them in a plain business-like way. His book gives an excellent idea of the new spirit that is transforming the old Russia of Nicholas.

At home, the Italian policy of the Government was resisted most fiercely from the Conservative benches. The late Lord Derby went so far as to say, speaking of the unity of Italy, that the inhabitants of Italy were only Italians in the sense in which hounds, greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, and curs were all dogs. The firm support that was given by the Government of that day to the cause of Italian unity and its attitude towards France, were its best title to the support of the Liberal party, for very little was done by it during the year of which we are speaking, in the way of improved legislation, though we should not forget the settlement of the paper duty. Lord Palmerston was already old, and more indisposed than ever to changes of any sort at home; while the lack of

interest in some questions, once in high favour with the Liberal party, such as that of the abolition of Church rates, showed that the spiral line on which this nation habitually advances was taking an unusually long sweep. Foolish persons began to talk, as they talked last year, and as some perhaps talk now, of a Conservative reaction in the country, and nourished high hopes; they found out their mistake, I fear, before they were many years older.

1862. Not, however, in the year 1862; for the general character of the session of that year, in spite of Mr. Lowe's educational reforms, was like that of its predecessor, and the causes of its uneventfulness were precisely similar; but men were already beginning to be slightly restless, and would no doubt have been more so if the interest of foreign affairs had not been so absorbing. The two chief points of interest were Italy and America. With regard to the first of these, the nation had quite made up its mind; and its knowledge that the influence of the Government was thoroughly good and very important did not a little to keep the Liberal Ministry in power. As to America, the nation's opinion was much less clearly made up. It wished for the abolition of slavery, but neither ministers nor their followers, with comparatively few exceptions, saw their way very clearly as to the other issues which were raised between the Federals and Confederates. All through the year, however, the effect of the appeal to arms that had been made by the Southern States was shown in the rapid increase of Abolitionist feeling in the North. As late as the month of

August, President Lincoln wrote—'If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it;' but, in another month, he had notified that, on the 1st January 1863, all persons held as slaves within any State in rebellion would be for ever free. The fates, too strong for human resolves, hesitations, or misgivings, were finding their way.

The Greek Revolution has only a right to be mentioned as having removed an absolute bar to the progress of that country by ridding it of King Otho. A single-minded monarch was substituted for one of an opposite character; but no further good has come of it. The truth is, that the Philhellenic enthusiasm of our fathers was one of the many bad results of the one-sided classical training which has so long prevailed in Western Europe. People stopped—as, I am sorry to say, they still stop—their Greek reading even before the Roman period, skipped the twenty centuries of degradation that succeeded its commencement, and then fondly imagined that the barbarians who followed Grivas or Colocotroni, and only learnt from their western friends to call themselves Hellenes, were the genuine heirs of Pericles and Plato. The new King of Greece has behaved like an upright and intelligent man; but the evils of that country lie far too deep to be cured by a mere change of dynasty.

The Great Exhibition which took place this year at South Kensington may claim a passing mention from the fact that it illustrated the vast advance we had made in 1860 in getting rid of shackles upon trade. Whereas in 1851 special arrangements had to

be made to prevent injustice being done to the shopkeepers who had to pay duty on their foreign goods, almost all the goods sent in 1862 could be disposed of without injustice to any one—the list of dutiable goods having, thanks to Mr. Gladstone, shrunk to very narrow limits.

1863. By the beginning of the session of 1863, the restlessness to which I have alluded in speaking of the previous year, had become positive uneasiness. People had made up their minds that things were to continue as they were till the death of Lord Palmerston; but many began to ask, with increasing anxiety, what was to happen after that event, and what were to be the bonds by which the Liberal party was then to be held together. Left for a time without a leader in domestic politics, except so far as a lead, which has not yet been followed, was given by Mr. Gladstone's speech on the Taxation of Charities, Independent members began to push those questions which seemed to them to require settlement—more especially questions relating to religious liberty. Hence arose the late Mr. Charles Buxton's motion about the Act of Uniformity, Mr. Dodson's motion about the Religious Tests for degrees at Oxford, and Mr. Dillwyn's motion about the Irish Church. Looked at in the light of after events, these motions were the most important domestic facts of 1863. Nor was it abroad a very satisfactory year for the Liberal party, marked as it was by the unwise, though not unprovoked or unintelligible, insurrection in Poland; by the terrible effusion of blood in America; and by the increased

misunderstanding between the King of Prussia and his Parliament.

Great Britain gave proof of her disinterestedness and her adhesion to principle in politics by determining to give up her Protectorate of the Ionian Islands, and to allow them to be re-united to Greece; but her having to do so was an untoward circumstance, not for us, but for all the East of Europe, for it extinguished a light which these regions could ill spare, as the better part of their inhabitants are beginning to find out, now that it is too late.

The year 1864 was probably the most critical through which England has passed for a very long time. The exact history of the negotiations with France, and the discussions in the Cabinet that took place between the death of Frederick VII. of Denmark and the beginning of the next session, are unknown to me, and will not be generally known till their interest has passed away, but certain it is that this country stood then at the 'Parting of the Ways.' If the influence of certain persons had prevailed, we should have become involved in a struggle which, sooner or later, could have had but one end. We should no doubt, with excellent intentions, and with many excuses to give for what we did, have put ourselves into opposition to the inevitable, and have suffered the penalty which all suffer who cannot read the riddle which is ever and anon propounded to all states, and to read which aright is the highest triumph of political sagacity. 1864.

All through the session the anxiety of those who

knew how fatal a false step would be, and who did not know how far there was or was not danger of those who wished us to take that false step getting their way, was kept alive by incessant attacks on the Government for not being warlike enough—attacks in which many sympathized who must long ere this have seen the error of their ways.

The pre-occupation of Parliament and of the nation with foreign affairs was fatal to anything very considerable being done in the way of legislation. The country was well administered. We had sensible and liberal finance, attended, as in all the years that followed 1860, with the very best effects upon the national prosperity, while Mr. Gladstone's memorable speech when the question of the reduction of the Borough Franchise was before the House, showed that we might look ere long for more stirring times in domestic politics.

The only considerable direct gain which the Liberal party made in any part of Europe this year was the transfer of the Capital of Italy from Turin to Florence, one step more towards the building up of that United Italy which Mr. Disraeli only a year or two before had believed to be a phantom.

1865. Most people expected the session of 1865 to be very barren of results, and largely occupied in electioneering. Much to the credit of the expiring Parliament, this did not turn out to be the case, and the Act for simplifying Clerical Subscription, the Union Chargeability Act, and the Government Annuities Act, were all good and Liberal measures.

It had long been foreseen that Lord Palmerston's

sceptre was passing to other hands, and in October of this year he died without giving his ring to Perdiccas, for Perdiccas, if common report speaks the truth, had gone before his chief. It is too early, even now, to pass a quite dispassionate judgment upon Lord Palmerston ; but I suspect that his fame will rest in the future almost altogether on what he did during the middle portion of his life, when he was Foreign Minister, not upon anything that he did or left undone when he was Prime Minister. His best title to the good-will of posterity will be the hatred which he inspired amongst all the worst men in all the worst Courts of Europe—a hatred which was summed up in the rhyme current about him during the reaction that followed 1848, in the most benighted portion of Austria :—

> If the devil has a son,
> Sure it is Lord Palmerston.

He lived long enough to see the fall of almost every one on the Continent of Europe whom, during his best days, he had most opposed, for during his best days he read very shrewdly those riddles of the times of which I spoke a few moments ago. It might almost be said of him, as Lamartine said of Voltaire, 'He had the time to combat against time, and when he fell, he was the conqueror.'

The Parliament of 1859 had been elected under the Conservatives, and, although it immediately dismissed them from power, the Liberal majority was always a small one, varying from 13 to 18. The general election of 1865 sent up a large Liberal ma-

jority, and the prospects of the party looked brighter in the early autumn than they had done for some time.

On the other side of the Atlantic, the close of the American war and the absolute ruin which fell on the Pro-slavery party were great gains; while in Europe the new Italian State continued to solidify itself, and in the far North a reform movement was inaugurated, which, supported by the King and by the most intelligent portion of the nation, ended a year or two afterwards in adding Sweden to the list of States whose Parliamentary Government is organized after the modern fashion.

1866. The year 1866 was one of fierce political contention at home, ending in a considerable advance of Liberal principles, although it saw the fall of a Liberal Ministry. The questions of Reform, and questions connected with the improvement of the Universities, were those perhaps which made most progress. On the whole, it was a melancholy year in England, darkened by much disease both amongst men and animals, by a bad harvest, and by many commercial disasters. On the Continent, on the other hand, the gains of the Liberal party were enormous, for the battle of Königgrätz, fought strangely enough upon Bohemian soil, closed in its favour the long contest, which really began 248 years before, when Martinitz and Sclawata were thrown out of the window of the grand old palace which still frowns over Prague. One has the less difficulty in speaking of that battle as a crowning mercy, as I once did in addressing you, because, great as were the

blessings which it brought to the victors, the blessings it brought to the vanquished were even greater. The Viennese are as far as possible from being unpatriotic, and yet the first thought of the most sensible people in Vienna, when the news of Benedek's defeat came, was—'Now, at last, we shall have a change of system;' and a change of system sure enough they had. The dawn of common sense in Austrian Government followed the happy calamities of 1859, and considerable progress had been made before the time of which I am now speaking, though there had been many hesitations and some reaction; but, after Königgrätz, the ruling powers saw that even hesitation was too dangerous, and in the next few months one venerable abomination after another went crashing down like a house of cards.

In the Sessions of 1867 and 1868 the Government then in power settled under the direction, not to say dictation, of the liberal majority in the House of Commons the long-vexed question of Parliamentary reform, and the weary controversy about Church rates was got rid of, while the opinion of the popular branch of the Legislature as to the Irish Church was expressed in a most unequivocal manner. It is only fair to mention that to the Conservative Government belongs the credit of having passed an Act for the improvement of the public schools, founded upon the labours of the Commission which was appointed by their predecessors in 1861. 1867-8.

Neither of these two years was very eventful on the Continent of Europe, except in Austria; where, as I have said, great and important gains were made

by the Liberal party. Hungary may indeed almost be said to have recommenced an existence which had been suspended since the Russian invasion of 1849. The Spanish Revolution of 1868 put an end to a desperate state of things; but the progress of the country during the last four years has hardly been such as its true friends either desired or expected, though undoubtedly a good deal has been done.

The General Election of 1868 more than fulfilled the most sanguine expectations of the Liberal party, and the Cabinet which came into power immediately set to work to bring our legislation as fast as possible into harmony with the views of its supporters. The first question settled was the disestablishment and disendowment of the Irish Church. Then the labours of Lord Taunton's Commission, which had been appointed under a previous Liberal Government, were utilized by the passing of an Act for the better management of those colossal foundations — the English Endowed Schools. Next a heavy blow and great discouragement was struck at professional crime by Mr. Bruce's Habitual Criminals Act, while the repeal of the tax on Fire Insurance and of the shilling duty on Corn encouraged forethought and stimulated an important commerce. Much too was done in the way of reducing overgrown establishments, for part of which it is only right to say that the Conservatives deserve a portion of the credit, though some of their speakers have been foolish enough to repudiate the acts of their own leaders, when they saw that an interested outcry was raised against it; just as they have repudiated their share

in bringing about those most wise and necessary measures which have, by withdrawing our troops from the Colonies, not only strengthened us greatly at home, but also, by calling out a spirit of self-reliance worthy of their British extraction, greatly strengthened the Colonies.

This year was further marked by very considerable gain to the Liberal party in France—far the greatest gain which had been made by that party since the commencement of the Second Empire. M. Emile Ollivier is now down in the world. It is the fashion to abuse him, and no doubt he made one of the most terrible and deadly blunders that ever was made by a public man; but, having said this, I will also say, from long and intimate acquaintance, that his impulses were always generous, and that in many respects his opinions were far more enlightened than those of many persons who ran him down as a deserter to Imperialism.

Our chief gains in the Session of 1870 were the Irish Land Act, and the Act providing general education for England; the former being a part of the policy in which the Liberal party has long insisted, that, namely, of taking away every shred of grievance from Ireland, so that we may not only atone for our errors in the past, but may with a clear conscience crush in that country any and every attempt at a resistance to law; and the second being the removal of the darkest stain on our national reputation for sagacity, the most serious cause of uneasiness to all far-seeing men: the fear, namely, that our mighty edifice of prosperity is raised on too narrow a base. 1870.

1870, however, and the commencement of the year that followed it, will be rendered for ever memorable by the gigantic war which freed Europe from the incubus of French militarism, and put an end (let us hope for ever) to the absurd boast—'When France is satisfied, Europe is at peace.' Of course it is very desirable that France and all other countries should be satisfied, but it is intolerable that any country should advance the pretension to which I have just referred. The Liberal cause has gained no greater victory since the Crimean War than it did when the influence of France, as a disturber of all men's peace, received a long *quietus*.

In 1789 and the years that followed it, France was really in many respects the representative of the modern spirit, and, as such, broke down with the greatest ease the old-world and effete organizations that were opposed to her. Before 1870, she had long said all she had *as a people*, for the present, got to say to the world, and had fallen far behind her adversary in intellectual vigour, in acquired knowledge, and in comprehension of the spirit of the time.

How much she had done so hardly anybody knew, and I for one was quite under the impression that, although in nearly all the higher walks of intellectual activity, France had slipped behind Germany, she had, nevertheless, attended to her military strength. I certainly thought the contest would be longer and less unequal, though, as you are well aware, I had no doubt about its issue; and predicted it when speaking here five years ago.

Before leaving 1870, let us not forget that it gave Rome to Italy, and completed the work which had been begun in 1848.

The session of 1871 will be gratefully remembered for the Army Regulation Act, and the abolition of the ridiculous and corrupt system of purchase. Then, too, the long controversy about opening University Degrees and Fellowships freely and unreservedly to Dissenters from the Established Church, came at length to a conclusion. On the Continent it was a year of comparative political stagnation; but everywhere trade, which had been checked by the calamities of the year before, sprang up with renewed vitality. In London, which, of course, gains most by all increase of trade, the figures of the Clearing House were higher in 1871 than they were the year before by no less than a thousand millions. 1871.

The year 1872 will soon be numbered with the past, but I will remember the maxim to call none happy before their end. It has, however, done some good things for us. The last session improved our army organization, improved our system of voting by making elections more grave and business-like than they have hitherto been in many places, and gave us a national school system in Scotland; while the recess has brought to us a change in the policy of the Inns of Court, small in appearance, but pregnant with important consequences—a change which all unprejudiced men have been advocating for many years: that is, the substitution of something like regular training for the present haphazard system of legal education. This change comes not 1872.

an hour too soon, for it is absolutely necessary if, as seems probable, Codification is ere long to be taken up in this country in the same spirit in which Mr. Stephen and others have carried it into effect in India. We *must* have men familiar with legal principles to work our codes when we get them.

On the Continent, perhaps the greatest gain of the year to the Liberal cause will arise from the impending reforms in Germany, which will take away some of the most well-founded subjects of complaint which the Liberal party had against the rulers of Prussia.

But, after all, the most important events of the year have been the two Arbitrations. I might argue that in the more important of these we have succeeded, as undoubtedly we have in one sense; for what nation has so great an interest as we in preventing the escape of Alabamas? But put that on one side. Look only at the immediate money loss. It would have been pleasant to have succeeded. It is always pleasant to win our lawsuits; but what is really important is this, that we, being at this moment very much stronger for warlike purposes than any other nation in the world, have set the example of submitting our case to adjudication, merely because we thought it the right and fair thing to do. The example will be much railed at, but will nevertheless be followed. No sensible man believes that Arbitration will prevent certain classes of wars, but it would unquestionably have prevented many wars that have brought desolation to half Europe; and

much is done if by Arbitration even one such war is prevented.

What has passed will no doubt add to the impression, which so generally prevails on the Continent, that we are determined not to fight in any quarrel. That is a natural enough impression for ill-informed people to hold; but it is strange that the lessons of our history are so ill read by men of merit, as, for instance, by the distinguished Austrian officer, Baron von Scholl, who writes about the defence of England in the November *Macmillan*. I should have thought it was clear enough, from all our history, that the determination to 'seek peace and ensue it,' which is just beginning to show itself as a power in our policy, was a flower of wisdom which had its roots deep in the soil of national aptitude for war.

At the commencement of every war into which we are dragged—and I am not sanguine enough to hope, however much I may wish, that we shall not be dragged into wars—all the world will be astounded at the turn for war displayed by the inhabitants of this Island, who, law-abiding and quiet as they are on the surface, are yet, under the surface, the fiercest and most determined population in Europe. It is strange that foreign statesmen and soldiers, in these days of rapid communication, cannot understand that; and will have to be disillusionized at the commencement of every struggle, as Canrobert was at the commencement of the Crimean campaign. That distinguished officer was standing at Gallipoli, along with the gentleman who told me this story, as first the French, and then the British, marched

by. Another French General said, as the British passed, 'Good heavens! what fine troops these are!' 'Yes,' said Canrobert thoughtfully, '*Now I begin* to understand the history of the Peninsular War.'

Really, there is a sort of grim humour in the thought—if it were not so sad—that a nation which professes to believe in the Sermon on the Mount should be reproached by other nations who profess to believe in the Sermon on the Mount, because, in the financial year 1872-73, it is only devoting to the destruction of human life a sum of £40,194,500; for that is the reasonable and moderate amount of our army and navy estimates in the Asiatic and European halves of the British Empire during the year now passing over our heads.

There are a few gains to the Liberal cause which I ought to mention, but which cannot well be assigned to their several years. Foremost amongst these is the removal of the Russian nightmare from Germany—a nightmare of the effect of which no one who was not familiar with that country before the Crimean War has any conception. Those were the times when a Russian writer could say with the most absolute adherence to truth—'Germany exists only in name—Germany is a mere collection of Baltic Provinces, to which the Czar has conceded certain illusory rights, as, for instance, the right of being not only the subjects of Nicholas, but also of their own little Princes.' Well, all that is as much dead and gone as the power of Carthage, or the rule of the Incas in Peru, and its disappearance is the work not

indeed of the last fifteen, but of the last eighteen years.

Then the great School Law of Holland, which is the most important event in the recent history of that wisely governed and progressive country, falls just out of the period I am reviewing, for it passed in the year 1857.

Next, I would mention the gradual flow of European ideas into the Turkish Empire, which has vastly raised the position of the subject races, and been productive of much, though, by no means, of unmixed good. The next few years in Turkey will be full of interest, the chief point of interest being the effect of this current of European ideas meeting the current of reviving Mussulman feeling, for let no man deceive himself into the idea that it is all ebb, and nothing but ebb, with Islam. Those who do so, *bode*, I fear, to be rudely undeceived.

Then there is a similar, but even more powerful flow of European ideas into Egypt, a country in which the counter current, of which I spoke a moment ago, is not nearly so strong; and which bids fair, as many believe, to present ere long the aspect of an Oriental body animated by a European soul.

Then there is the decline, I may say almost the disappearance, of the West African Slave Trade. And last, though not least, there is that vast progress in India which I sketched when addressing you in 1869.

Contrasts.

I will conclude with one or two figures, illustrating the gigantic progress that this country has made during the time we have been reviewing. From 1857 to 1871, the annual value of our trade in-

creased by nearly 280 millions. From 1857 to 1870, the annual value of property and profits assessed to the Income-tax increased by about 130 millions. From 1857 to 1871, about 42 millions of annual taxation were remitted, and 15 added. In other words, 27 millions were remitted. From 1858 to 1872, the National Debt decreased by about 38 millions. These are gratifying facts, but two that I am going to mention are of even better augury for the future. There is now 30 per cent. less serious crime committed than there was when the population was less by 30 per cent. than it now is; and whereas there were about 700,000 children at the school inspections of Great Britain in 1857, there were, by the last returns which I have seen, 1,800,000 children at these inspections. I might enlarge at great length about the increased general comfort, about the freer, less prejudiced, more inquiring spirit that prevails all around us, about the determination that is becoming always more and more general, to prove all things, to hold fast that which is good. I wish some man of science would give us a bird's-eye view of what progress has been made in science, marking especially the *new ideas* that have been born into the world since the end of 1857.

The Liberal Constituencies.

And now I have traced, in the briefest outline possible, the history of the advance of the Liberal cause during the last fifteen years. Some things I have probably omitted through inadvertence, and much that might fairly find a place I have omitted advisedly. Brief, however, as the outline is, is it not a wonderful record of progress? Now, with

all this progress; you, and the various Liberal Ministries which you and those like you have put and kept in power, have thoroughly sympathized, and you and they have aided it to the best of your and their ability. There is hardly one of the changes that has occurred at home which has not been bitterly opposed by the opposite political connexion, and there are comparatively few of those which have occurred abroad which have commanded the sympathies of any but isolated individuals in that connexion. All honour to these isolated individuals; but they will be the first to admit the general truth of my remark.

The moral which I want to point is this—that the road upon which you and I have been walking for the last half generation is the right road; and that we cannot do better than continue to walk upon it, not hurriedly, so as, perchance, to trip or miss the way, but steadily and deliberately, with ever-increasing confidence that it will lead us, and all who follow us, to national well-being in the most comprehensive sense. The Moral.

A wise man at one of the turning-points of the world's history, summed up his view of the situation in the sad words—

"NIL EXPEDIT—LABOREMUS,"
"It is all in vain—still let us labour on."

We live in a happier time, and may amend the saying.

As to the future, I shall, however, say nothing on this occasion, because I laid before you at great

length, just a year ago, not so much my expectations as my hopes about it.[1] If I were speaking where I was not known, I should feel it necessary to guard against the supposition that because I think that a great deal has been done in the last fifteen years, a great deal does not remain to do; but I come here year by year to speak what is uppermost in my mind, in so far as it can be put into a not intolerably long speech, and what I have said now must be taken in connexion with what I have said to you before, and deliberately republished, about many matters at home and abroad.

[1] Mr. Grant Duff on the Teachings of Richard Cobden. Published by the Cobden Club.

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